

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /060 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2242

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CZ, US

SUBJECT: CALL ON NATIONAL FRONT LEADER

1. ON MARCH 8, 1977, I PAID A CALL ON TOMAS TRAVNICEK, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK NATIONAL FRONT, WHICH IS THE FIRST CALL I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ARRANGE ON A POLITICAL OFFICIAL WITHOUT A GOVERNMENT POSITION. TRAVNICEK'S PARTY-LINE RECITATION OF FRONT ACTIVITIES IS BEING REPORTED BY MEMCON. HE USED THE OCCASION ALSO TO CRITICIZE NON-IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CLAIMS/GOLD AGREEMENT, RECENT COMMENTS BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT (ON HUMAN RIGHTS HERE), AND "A RADIO STATION FINANCED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT" ALL OF WHICH HE EMPHASIZED HE WAS DOING "IN THE NAME OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK PEOPLE", NOT THE GOVERNMENT. I GAVE TRAVNICEK MY, BY NOW, STANDARD REPLIES ON THESE ISSUES.

2. TRAVNICEK TOOK A SUPRISINGLY MILD LINE IN HIS CRITICISMS AND IN THE DISCUSSION AS A WHOLE. THE CALL ON HIM AND RECENTLY ON THE NATIONAL ART GALLERY DIRECTOR, MARKED THE START OF A SERIES OF CALLS ON GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHICH HAVE JUST BEEN ARRANGED, AFTER A LONG DELAY. IN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS I AM TO CALL ON THE RECTOR OF CHARLES UNIVERSITY, THE PRESIDENT OF THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, AND, POSSIBLY, THE CSSR MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE.

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THE CALLS HAD BEEN REQUESTED MONTHS AGO THROUGH FOREIGN MINISTRY PROTOCOL, AND KEPT ALIVE BY CONSTANT NEEDLING OF TOP-AND MIDDLE-LEVEL OFFICIALS, BUT WELL MAY HAVE BEEN STIRRED INTO ACTION AT PRESENT ONLY BECAUSE FOREIGN MINISTER CHNOUPEK WISHES TO PUSH HIS "BUSINESS AS USUAL" AND ACTIVIST FOREIGN POLICY.

BYRNE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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